



Department of Justice

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MARCELINE, MISSOURI MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES

ST. LOUIS, MO - Theodore D. Kleist pled guilty to possession of child pornography, United States Attorney Catherine L. Hanaway and Linn County Prosecuting Attorney Tracy Carlson announced today.

"In order to punish conduct that harms children, this office will prosecute child pornography cases, even when there is a related State prosecution against the same person," said Hanaway. "People who victimize our most innocent citizens deserve the most severe punishment possible."

"This conviction should send a message to those who believe they can possess and distribute photographs of underage children without any consequence," said Carlson. "Law enforcement at all levels is currently working together to find them, charge them, and convict them."

In July 2006, a Marceline Police Department Officer was dispatched to a residence in the 100 block of East Crocker Street, Marceline, Missouri, to respond to a 911 call from a woman at that residence. Based on investigation conducted at the residence, the officer seized a Dell computer tower. The FBI later obtained search warrants for the computer and related storage devices. Analysis conducted by the Regional Computer Crime Education and Enforcement Group (RCCEEG) revealed over 100 images of child pornography, some of which depicted minors under the age of 12 engaged in sexually explicit conduct.

Additionally, subsequent investigation determined that Kleist was engaged in a pattern of activity involving the sexual abuse of a minor during 2006.

Kleist, 36, of 100 block of East Crocker Street, Marceline, pled guilty to one felony count of possession of child pornography. He appeared before United States District Judge Stephen N. Limbaugh. Kleist now faces a maximum penalty of ten years in prison and/or a fine of \$250,000, followed by supervised release for life, when he is sentenced on February 27, 2006.

In addition to the PA Carlson and the Marceline Police Department, Hanaway went on to commend the joint investigative work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Regional Computer Crime Education & Enforcement Group, and the Linn and Livingston County Sheriff's Departments.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to

protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov/.

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